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Nationality Breakdown

1. The percentage relationship between nationalities in Soviet Army units with which I was familiar varied from division to division.
 - a) In the Fourth Guards Division there were about 35 Jews (2.7 per cent), 140 Ukrainians (10.8 per cent), about 200 Belorussians (15.4 per cent), out of 1,300 officers. In addition, there were eight Tatars, two Armenians, and one Gypsy.
 - b) In the 56th Division there were more Siberians, both among the officers and in the ranks. The Siberians made up from 35 to 40 per cent of the entire division; there were even more Ukrainians, but rather few Russians. The number of Jews in almost all of the detachments never exceeded five to six per cent of the total.
 - c) In the 90th Division there were many Cossacks and Mongolians at the end of World War II. They made up more than 15 per cent of the division.
 - d) Ninety-five per cent of the men in the 16th Mechanized Division were Azerbaijanis (the division had been formed in Azerbaijan). At the end of World War II, the men were redistributed because of their strong national traditions and low combat performance; as a result only about 20 Azerbaijanis remained, and the division became Russian-Ukrainian in composition. The number of Jews was also small, 65 to 70 officers and 150 non-commissioned and enlisted personnel.
2. Nationalities in the units known to me were so mixed that there appeared to be representatives from every oblast and republic of the USSR. This intermingling of national stocks was particularly evident half-way through World War II when certain nationality groups such as the Ukrainians showed themselves to be more disloyal than others and either offered less resistance to the enemy or deserted. At the end of World War II, replacements were sent to battered divisions without consideration of nationalities. Time was short and cannon fodder was needed to make up combat losses.

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Commissioning and Reassignment of Officers

3. I am not in a position to comment on military schools or academies as I received a direct commission and never attended any formal training courses. In 1942 and 43 there was a great shortage of combat officers and many officers of the rear services were re-certified and transferred. Eighty per cent of the officers of the administrative and quartermaster services were sent to KUKS (advanced training courses for officers) schools, which were organized in Moscow, Leningrad and other cities. After three or, in some schools, six months of training, the officers emerged as platoon and company commanders. Frequently the officers received lower ranks in the combat services than they had previously held in the rear services. Thus a captain in the quartermaster service, after completing the KUKS school, could expect to be demoted to the rank of junior lieutenant, rarely of lieutenant, in the combat service.
4. As a rule, officers completing courses in a military school or academy were not returned to their units or detachments. Rather they were assigned to the personnel section of the military district in which the given school was located, and the personnel section then reassigned them at will.
5. After the battle of Danzig, I was sent to a hospital [REDACTED] with a fractured leg. After my leg was pisted in a cast, the hospital returned me to my division within five days and, though incapacitated, I carried on my work as best I could. The commander of the division made these arrangements because he did not wish to lose me; if I had remained in the hospital much longer the chances of my reassignment to his division would have been small. After convalescence, the hospital would have normally sent me either to the personnel section of the army or to a reserve unit; in either case I would have been reassigned to a new detachment.

Leaves and Furloughs

6. During World War II officers and soldiers of the Soviet Army did not [REDACTED] place of stay indicated was made out for me. This official document was stamped with a counter-intelligence code letter which authorized the bearer to cross the Soviet border once in either direction. I also received a food certificate authorizing me to receive rations from the command of the city in which I spent my leave. Upon leaving occupied Germany, Soviet military personnel on leave or furlough were stripped of their personal weapons. Any weapon found in the possession of military personnel on leave outside of Germany was confiscated.

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